

Report of the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

The Wellesley Housing Development Corporation (WHDC) is a non-profit corporation authorized in 1997 by Annual Town Meeting and the Selectmen and established by special legislation enacted in 1998 by the General Court to preserve and create affordable housing in Wellesley. In July 2000 the Board of Selectmen appointed the initial WHDC Board of Directors. The purpose of this report is to inform the 2006 Annual Town Meeting and Town residents of WHDC's activities to date.

The WHDC's affordable housing mission is to serve two vital interests of the Town: to preserve the Town's tradition of being the home to families from a broad range of economic backgrounds and to respond to State law affordable housing mandates. The WHDC strives to implement that mission by educating Town residents, supporting appropriate affordable housing initiatives, and collaborating or partnering with developers of affordable housing proposals that are sensitive to the traditional character of Wellesley.

Set forth below are brief summaries of some of the more significant efforts pursued by the WHDC over the past few years to preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing in Wellesley:

- The WHDC has pursued initiatives with several developers to create new affordable housing in the Town, including:
 - The WHDC designed the lottery and the local preference criteria used to select the first-time homebuyers of three affordable homeownership units in a townhouse condominium project on Overbrook Road developed in a partnership between the developer and the Board of Selectmen. The WHDC also worked with the acting director of the Housing Authority to develop the marketing program for and to conduct that housing lottery.
 - The WHDC initiated the reuse of the Walnut Street firestation as a mixed-use residential condominium and historic preservation project containing one affordable homeownership unit. Town Meeting approved funding for the preparation of a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the conversion. Four developers responded to the RFP, and subsequent Town Meeting action approved the selection of New Boston Ventures to redevelop the firehouse. The WHDC anticipates that the Zoning Board of Appeals will issue a friendly comprehensive permit for the firehouse shortly and construction will be able to start in the Spring of 2006.
- Several local realtors regularly contact the WHDC as housing comes on the market that may be suitable for the WHDC's purposes. WHDC's bid on one such opportunity was unsuccessful. The WHDC appreciates the assistance of these local realtors and expects future opportunities to purchase a house.
- Individual directors of the WHDC have served on several Town committees. They include the Community Preservation Act Study Committee, the Tailby Study Committee, the Community Preservation Committee, and the (Ardemore) Condominium Conversion Study Committee.
- In a joint effort with the Planning Board, the WHDC developed an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw that was approved by the 2004 Annual Town Meeting. As a result of that new Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw, the proposed developments at Linden Square and the Wellesley Inn will be providing a number of new affordable units.
- The Board of Public Works transferred ownership of a house on Boulevard Road to the Board of Selectmen. The Selectmen, with Town Meeting's approval, leased the

house to the WHDC for conversion to affordable housing. In July 2005 the DPW employee who had been renting the house moved out and the WHDC is now in the process of planning for affordable housing on the site.

- Developers who are considering developments with affordable housing components meet with the directors from time to time to review projects.
- The WHDC has been offered several houses slated for demolition for removal to another site. The directors have considered each of these offers but, to date, issues of timing, cost, or location have prevented acceptance of any of these homes.
- Representatives of the WHDC met with the developers of some of the larger projects in Town (such Linden Square and Wellesley Inn). The WHDC's role has been to help develop, in conjunction with the Planning Board, the implementation of the affordable housing responsibilities of the developers under the Town's Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw.

The members of the WHDC Board of Directors are dedicated to providing affordable housing opportunities for people with modest economic means and believe that our community is enriched by a diverse population. Meeting both the need and the State mandate for affordable housing is both challenging and rewarding. We welcome partnerships with professional, civic, religious, and social groups. To discuss affordable housing options for Wellesley, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Directors of the Wellesley Housing Development Corporation

Thomas G. Schnorr, Chairman
Morris W. Kellogg
Robert E. Kenney
Dona M. Kemp
Katherine K. Macdonald

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

The Wellesley Free Library Board of Trustees is pleased to report on the success of the new main library as a community center and vital resource for the town of Wellesley. Statistics confirm increases in circulation. Increased attendance at programs indicates interest of the community on a wide-range and variety of topics. Use of the building for serious study, in particular by the school-age population, supports the goals that Trustees wished to achieve with the completion of the new Main Library.

Budget

As with all town departments, the Trustees wrestled with the need to provide services in an unfavorable economic climate. Trustees remain committed to the full support of the main library while balancing this with the interest for continued support of the two branches. Trustees recognize the role the Branches play in the delivery of service to the elderly and younger populations in town. Trustees faced the difficult decision this year of placing the branches in an override vote that ultimately failed. Concerned citizens quickly raised money to reinstate branch service for one year and Trustees gratefully accepted this gift.